

REMARKS

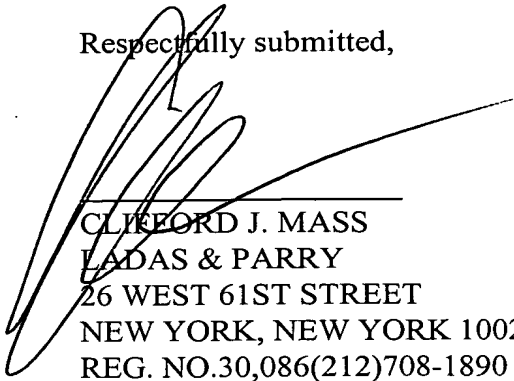
The courtesy of Examiner Curtis in conducting a telephone interview with the undersigned on October 20, 2003 is gratefully acknowledged. In the interview, Applicants discussed the amended claim 1 and claims 14 and 15 presented herewith. As discussed in the interview, the recitations in these claims are supported in the specification as filed at page 4, second paragraph, and figures 3 and 4 of the drawings. New claims 16-19, which contain recitations corresponding to the recitations in claims 14 and 15, are also presented herewith.

In the interview, Applicants discussed how the claims as amended distinguish over the optical device shown in the cited Kurata et al reference. In particular, Applicants discussed how the Kurata reference teaches the necessity of including in their described optical device birefringent elements in addition to the birefringent element 27 cited by the Examiner (see, e.g., Kurata et al at Fig. 7, elements 28 and 29). Applicants discussed how these additional birefringent elements are excluded by the claims as amended.

The Examiner advised that the amendments to the claims would require a further search and this Request for Continued Examination is being filed as a result.

An early and favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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